IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated:

1. (previously presented) A method for performing an operation on a graphic object in a display of overlapping graphic objects in a data processing system, the method comprising the steps of:

storing a model of a graphic object, wherein said model includes an indication of whether said graphic object is a parent or child of another graphic object;

displaying a plurality of overlapping graphic objects to a user;

detecting a selection by the user of a graphics editing operation to be performed on a graphic object;

detecting a position of a pointer with respect to a display of said plurality of overlapping graphic objects;

displaying to a user a list of overlapping graphic objects which coincide with said pointer position and on which said graphics editing operation can be performed;

detecting a selection by the user of one graphic object of said indicated plurality of overlapping graphic objects as a target graphic object without the user changing said pointer position to make said selection;

performing said graphics editing operation on said target graphic object; and

making said target graphic object visible during performance of the graphics editing operation on said target graphic object.

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said position of a pointer comprises a user-defined area of said display described by the motion of said pointer in response to said user dragging an input device.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of selecting the graphics editing operation comprises detecting a user input identifying selection of a graphics editing tool.

4. (original) The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of changing the form of said pointer on said display in response to detection of said user input selection

5. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of selecting the graphics editing operation to be performed comprises selecting a source graphic object and said step of performing the graphics editing operation comprises dropping said source graphic object onto said target graphic object.

6. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of storing the positions of said plurality of overlapping graphic objects on said display and comparing said pointer position with said graphic object positions to determine which graphic objects are coincident with the pointer.

7. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of maintaining a record of attributes relating to each of said graphic objects.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said displaying step comprises continuously displaying to the user a hover window listing said graphic objects which are coincident with said pointer position and continuously updating said hover window in response to changes in said pointer position.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said graphics editing operation comprises adding text to said target object.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein said graphics editing operation further comprises the steps of:

opening a text box on said target graphic object;

displaying a text insertion cursor in said text box to display the location where new text will be inserted; and

ending said graphic operation in response to the user moving said pointer to a position outside of said text box and depressing a control button on an input device.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of determining whether said target graphic object is the outermost one of said graphic objects which are coincident with the position of the pointer.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the step of making said target graphic object visible comprises temporarily making at least the outermost one of said coincident graphic objects transparent.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the outermost coincident graphic object is a child graphic object to a parent graphic object and the step of making the selected target graphic object visible comprises temporarily making said parent graphic object transparent in response to making said child graphic object transparent.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein said outermost one of the coincident graphic objects reappears automatically after the graphics editing operation has been performed on said target graphic object.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of displaying a list of overlapping graphic objects is dependent on said position of the pointer remaining the same for a certain period of time.

16. (currently amended) A software tool for performing a graphics editing operation on a graphic object in a display of overlapping graphic objects in a data processing system, the tool being operable to cause control circuitry within said data processing system to:

store a model of a graphic object, wherein said model includes an indication of whether said graphic object is a parent or child of another graphic object;

display a plurality of overlapping graphic objects to a user;

detect a selection by the user of a graphics editing operation to be performed on a graphic object;

detect a position of a pointer with respect to a display of said plurality of overlapping graphic objects;

display to a user a list of overlapping graphic objects which coincide with said pointer position and on which said graphics editing operation can be performed;

detect a selection by the user of one graphic object of said indicated plurality of overlapping graphic objects as a target graphic object without the user changing said pointer position to make said selection;

perform the graphics manipulation operation on said target graphic object; and

~~making~~ make said target graphic object visible during performance of the graphics editing operation on said target graphic object.

17. (previously presented) The software tool of claim 16, wherein said position of a pointer comprises a user-defined area of said display described by the motion of said pointer in response to said user dragging an input device.

18. (previously presented) The software tool of claim 16, operable to change the form of said pointer on said display in response to detection of said user input selection.

19. (previously presented) The software tool of claim 16, operable to select a source object and drop said source object onto said target graphic object.

20. (previously presented) The software tool of claim 16, operable to store the positions of said plurality of overlapping graphic objects on said display and compare said pointer position with said graphic object positions to determine which graphic objects are coincident with the pointer.

21. (original) The software tool of claim 16, operable to maintain a record of attributes relating to each of said graphic objects.

22. (previously presented) The software tool of claim 16, operable to continuously display to the user a hover window listing said graphic objects which are coincident with said pointer position and continuously updating said hover window in response to changes in said pointer position.

23. (currently amended) The software tool of claim 16, wherein said graphics editing operation comprises adding text to said target object.

24. (previously presented) The software tool of claim 23, wherein said graphics editing operation further comprises the steps of:

opening a text box on said target graphic object;

displaying a text insertion cursor in said text box to display the location where new text will be inserted; and

ending said graphic operation in response to the user moving said pointer to a position outside of said text box and depressing a control button on an input device.

25. (previously presented) The software tool of claim 16, operable to determine whether said target graphic object is the outermost one of said graphic objects which are coincident with the position of the pointer.

26. (original) The software tool of claim 24, operable to make at least the outermost one of said coincident graphic objects temporarily transparent.

27. (previously presented) The software tool of claim 26, operable to make said outermost one of the coincident graphic objects reappear automatically after the graphics editing operation has been performed on said target graphic object.

28. (cancelled).

29. (cancelled).

30. (currently amended) A tangible computer-readable medium comprising a computer program element including computer program instructions to implement the method of claim 1, said tangible computer-readable medium comprising one or more of the following set of media: a magnetic disk or tape, solid-state memory, a compact disk and a digital versatile disk.

31. (canceled).

32. (original) A data processing system comprising a software tool according to claim 16.